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small benches on which to rest during their long hours of waiting. After 1700 hours, the white-collar workers and laborers form lines until the shops close for the night. Often, after waiting many hours, they have to return home empty-handed.

Contrary to custom, the leaders were not able to prevent these conditions before the municipal elections of the 14th of this month or before the New Year holidays.

In the [government] administration as well as in the enterprises, the situation is serious because funds are lacking and salaries are not paid. On the 20th of this month, workers received only small "advances" on the pay already due them.

A few days ago, the workers were notified officially that they would be paid before 31 December 1952. On the following day, however, this notification was canceled by the Ministry of Finance, which announced that salaries would be paid between 3 and 7 January 1953.

A white-collar worker told me last night that all the members of the ministry where he works are planning to protest violently if the salaries are not paid today. I am sure nothing will happen, because the fear of losing their jobs will prevent them from acting.

Another result of the current economic crisis is mass dismissals from all administrations, shops, factories, and enterprises.

The following figures indicate the number of employees who have been discharged from administrative organizations in Sofia only: National Bank of Bulgaria, 500; Investment Bank, 240; State Pharmaceutical Enterprise, 140; and the Markoop (Consumers' Cooperative), 70. This makes a total of about 1,000 people discharged from only 4 organizations, which means that many thousands of persons are jobless. The dismissals are effective as of 1 January 1953. The dismissal notices were delivered at the beginning of this week.

In the industrial enterprises, the situation is the same. Everywhere one finds total disorganization. There is a shortage of material, and work is suspended for several days each week. These interruptions affect the production norms, as well as the workers' wages, which are paid according to output.

Many officials and employees have not been paid for 2 months. They live as well as they can with the small "advances" which are distributed from time to time.

As far as the building program is concerned, we have the impression, at least in Sofia, that it is progressing rapidly, because many new and large buildings have sprung up in conformity with the reconstruction plan for the center of the capital. However, when a Communist engineer was being congratulated recently on the work accomplished, he looked at the speaker with astonishment and replied that this was only camouflage to give the impression that it was the same all over the country, and that actually most of the building objectives have been abandoned for lack of funds.

In the villages, the situation is also critical. Cooperative farmers receive per working day, only one kilogram of wheat with which to make their bread; and 4 leva, which will buy, for instance, one liter of milk.

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This is the present economic situation in Bulgaria. However, this did not prevent the authorities from organizing recently in the provinces a "Fair of Plenty" where the best produce was exhibited, and launching press propaganda concerning it, or from proclaiming that the Five-Year Economic Plan (1949-53) had been fulfilled in 4 years.

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